

## **Week of May 6, 2002: MaineDOT Flash Facts**

### **Topic: Motorcycle Safety**

#### **Driver safety question:**

- How many motorcycle crashes happen in Maine each year? (500)
- What percent of motorcyclists involved in crashes were wearing helmets? (about 50%)
- There are 500 reported motorcycle crashes in Maine each year-how many injuries are reported? (500)

#### **Openers**

- Spring is here, and those who enjoy motorcycling are now out on the roads.
- Motorcycles share the road with all other vehicle types. Other drivers often fail to see motorcycles because they're smaller than other vehicles.
- Motorcycles provide a great open feel of the road, but that exposure leaves the riders much more vulnerable to injury in the event of a crash.

#### **Safety Information**

- Approximately 500 motorcycle crashes occur in Maine each year.
- Maine averages 17 fatalities and 500 injuries from motorcycle crashes each year.
- The leading contributing factors in motorcycle crashes are:
  - Illegal/Unsafe Speed (about 20%) - so travel at safe speeds.
  - Driver Inattention/Distraction (about 21%) -so pay constant attention to the driving task.
  - Driver Inexperience (about 13%) -so ride within your capabilities.
- The leading types of motorcycle crashes are:
  - Run Off Road (25%) - so maintain safe speeds and good control of your bike.
  - Intersection Collisions (23%) – Other drivers need to watch for motorcycles when entering an intersection. If you are a motorcyclist, remember that you are more difficult to spot, so make sure the intersection is safe to enter.
  - Rear End Collisions (22%) - leave plenty of room between you and the vehicle ahead, avoid sudden stops and avoid making passes that may interrupt traffic flow or could put the motorcyclist in a squeeze.
- Maine Motorcycle crash studies have shown:
  - The highest motorcycle crash incidence is for riders aged 20-24.*
  - About half of all Maine motorcyclists involved in crashes wore helmets while riding. Those not wearing helmets were three times more likely to have a head injury.
  - Injured helmet users stayed in the hospital less than half as long as those who did not wear a helmet.